

TIGERS

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La Grande held a 1-0 lead most of the match thanks to a first-half goal by Lexee Gomes, but North Marion pulled even in the 72nd minute on a goal by Hailey Welch — the first goal allowed by the Tigers since Sept. 15 against Baker.

The Tigers responded almost immediately as Garlitz put home a deep strike for a 2-1 lead. That lead seemed safe against La Grande's impenetrable defense — which had allowed just two goals all season — but Welch sent a 30-yard boot into the top of the net just out of Akers' reach in the closing seconds of regulation to even the score.

Akers said she touched the ball, but "I hit it up, and it just didn't work in my favor."

La Grande responded and controlled the overtime sessions with an 8-2 shot advantage, but all five shots on goal were turned away by Mallory Patzer, who finished with seven saves off the bench for North Marion.

"Just staying calm, sticking to our game plan," Rice said of how the team was able to shake off the final few minutes before overtime. "I think that helped us, and hopefully it will continue to help us as we go."

Garlitz also assisted Gomes' goal in the first half, playing a through ball ahead that the senior tracked down before cutting left and scoring from about nine yards for a 1-0 lead in the 24th minute.

"Audrey has been amazing all season," Akers said.



Ronald Bond/The Observer

La Grande's Audrey Garlitz connects on the game-winning penalty kick to send the Tigers to the state quarterfinals for the second year in a row.

"I have been so proud of her. She has grown so much since summer practices. I think she's such a crucial part of the team. I'm so thankful for her."

La Grande, which remains undefeated at 13-0, hosts Gladstone in the quarterfinals Saturday night at Community Stadium. The Gladiators beat Baker, 6-0, in their first-round game Wednesday. Gladstone also played North Marion twice this season, coming away with a 2-1 victory both times.

The quarterfinals is where La Grande saw its season end a year ago with a 5-1 loss to Molalla. To get past that, Rice said the key is "sticking to our game plan (and) finishing all our chances when we get them. Hopefully we come out on top."



Ronald Bond/The Observer

LHS goalkeeper Faith Akers celebrates after making a save during the penalty shootout Wednesday.

Blazers take down Davis-less Pels

The Associated Press

While the Trail Blazers found it easy to score against the Pelicans, in the end it was their defense — and some stops in the fourth quarter — that helped Portland pull away.

Damian Lillard scored 26 points to help Portland beat New Orleans 132-119 on Thursday night in the first meeting between the teams since the Pelicans swept the Trail Blazers in the first round of last season's playoffs.

Jusuf Nurkic added 20 points and nine rebounds for the Blazers, who made 18 3-pointers in their third straight win.

New Orleans, hurt by the absence of star Anthony Davis, dropped its fourth consecutive game. The Pelicans were the sixth seed last season when they upset the third-seeded Blazers in the playoffs.

"Tonight we came out and it was easy on offense, so it seemed like we kind of just fell into that trap, where we're going to be able to score and hoping they miss instead of going out there and making them miss, and taking the challenge. And seeing that Anthony Davis wasn't out there, you take those situations for granted. And they made us pay for it early," Lillard said. "I think we showed our maturity and growth in how we rebounded and adjusted and made the changes we needed to make."

Julius Randle scored 29

points, but Pelicans star Davis was sidelined by a right elbow sprain. Davis had returned from the injury Wednesday night against Golden State, when he collected 17 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists in a 131-121 loss to the Warriors.

Davis leads New Orleans with 25.2 points and 13 rebounds per game. He was replaced in the starting lineup against the Blazers by Jahliil Okafor.

The Blazers were home after a 3-1 trip that included victories at Orlando, Indiana and Houston.

Portland was without Maurice Harkless because of a lingering left knee injury. Harkless has played in five of the Blazers' eight games this season.

Lillard had 10 points in the first quarter and the Blazers led 35-31. The Pelicans were paced by Randle, who had 23 points in the first half before he collected three fouls and went back to the bench.

Seth Curry's 3-pointer gave the Blazers a 51-44 advantage. E'Twaun Moore's 3-pointer got the Pelicans within three late in the half, but the Blazers led 70-65 at the break.

Moore's floater got the Pelicans as close as 65-64 in the third quarter but Portland held New Orleans off until Randle's jumper and Nikola Mirotic's free throw tied it at 90. Portland hit consecutive 3-pointers to end the threat.

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